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T-11 CONFIDENTIAL, USA-1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 1400.

FROM: NFSC/OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS.

I. EL SALVADOR: ASSASSINATION OF ARCHBISHOP ROMERO.

[REDACTED]

I. EL SALVADOR// THE ASSASSINATION OF ARCHBISHOP  
ROMERO--THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PUBLIC FIGURE IN EL SALVADOR--  
COULD PRODUCE WIDESPREAD VIOLENCE AND FURTHER DIMS THE  
GOVERNMENT'S CHANCES OF SURVIVAL.//

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved for Release

NOV 1991

// THE KILLING, UNQUESTIONABLY THE WORK OF RIGHT-WING TERRORISTS, IS LIKELY TO PROVOKE VIOLENT REPRISALS BY THE EXTREME LEFT AND COULD TOUCH OFF A POPULAR INSURRECTION. REACTION TO THE ASSASSINATION ALSO MAY SPLIT THE COALITION GOVERNMENT, ALREADY WEAKENED BY DISSENSION OVER THE MILITARY'S FAILURE TO CURB RIGHTIST VIOLENCE. REGARDLESS OF GUILT, THE MILITARY WILL AT LEAST STAND ACCUSED OF HAVING INSPIRED THE SHOOTING, AND THE US--BECAUSE OF A PERCEIVED ASSOCIATION WITH THE MILITARY--MAY ALSO SHARE THE BLAME. THE ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION VIEWS THE POSSIBLE COLLAPSE OF THE RULING JUNTA AS A WAY TO DRIVE THE CIVILIANS FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND ENGINEER A RESTORATION OF REPRESSIVE MILITARY RULE.//

// KNOWN AS THE CHAMPION OF THE POOR, THE ARCHBISHOP HAD BEEN THE NATION'S MOST ARTICULATE CRITIC OF OPPRESSION AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE, AND HAD RECENTLY STEPPED UP HIS DENUNCIATIONS OF VIOLENCE BY THE SECURITY FORCES AND THE RIGHT. HE ALSO CAME CLOSE TO ENDORsing THE ALLIANCE OF EXTREME-LEFT ORGANIZATIONS AS A POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE.//